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USSR BRICK INDUSTRY STILL UNSATISFACTORY; LITHUANIAN PLANTS EXPAND

BRICKS SCARCE IN KAZAKHSTAN -- Kazakhstanskaya Pravda, 18 Jul 50

Bricks shipped to distant construction projects of Vostochno-Kazakhstan Oblast from Alma-Ata are called "gold," because they are so precious. Each brick is reloaded six times on the way from the plant to the construction project. It is shipped by truck, flatcar, river barge, and again by truck. The cost of transport and loading and unloading increases the cost of brick six times. To this must be added the large amount of waste in reloading. As a final result, the construction project pays 13 times more than the factory price for the bricks.

During a one-year period, millions of bricks have been shipped from Alma-Ata to distant areas in eastern Kazakhstan. Why? Are clay and fuel not found in those regions? It appears that there are both clay and fuel. According to state plan, construction of a large brick plant was to be started in Vostochno-Kazakhstan Oblast in 1948. In 1950, the plant could have produced locally 10 million bricks. Funds have been provided for this project and a considerable amount of equipment has been delivered. But the plant does not yet exist. Construction has not yet begun because all material for the planning of this plant, which was sent in from Ust'-Kamenogorsk 2 years ago, appears to have been lost in the Republic Ministry of Construction Materials Industry.

Kazakhstanskaya Pravda, 26 Jul 50

A new mechanized brick plant of the Ministry of Construction Materials Industry Kazakh SSR is being built in Taldy-Kurgan Oblast, near Kara-Bulak Station. The plant is to operate all year round and is to produce 8 million bricks per year.

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LITHUANIAN BRICK INDUSTRY EXPANDS -- Promyshlennost' Stroitel'nykh Materialov, 11 Aug 50

Production of construction materials in Lithuania has expanded. Two new brick plants, the "Daugelyay" Plant in Shaulyay Oblast and the "Aniushchay" Plant in Vil'nyus Oblast, were opened recently. The "Daugelyay" Plant is the first brick plant in the republic to start year-round production with complete mechanization of production processes. It has a clay storage section which can hold a supply of clay sufficient for a 3-month operation period. It also has a covered peat storage area with conveyers for transporting the fuel to the firing kilns and to the artificial driers.

Enterprises of the construction materials industry in Lithuania have increased their productive capacities and mastered the production of new materials. Seven brick plants of the republic have begun production of drainpipes for land development work. The "Bigukas" Plant has begun production of colored silica brick. The "Palemonas" Plant is manufacturing porous light bricks with an admixture of 30 percent half-burnt sawdust.

MOSCOW BRICKS UNSATISFACTORY -- Vechernyaya Moskva, 14 Aug 50

The bricks now being produced by Moscow brick plants are unsatisfactory as to both quality and quantity. Many of the plants are not utilizing the greater part of their reserves. New progressive methods are not being put into practice on a wide scale. The production of ceramic materials, replacing cement and brick, has not yet been widely introduced by Moscow plants, although they are being manufactured successfully in the Ukraine and have met with general approval in that republic.

PRODUCTION OF SILICA BRICKS CRITICIZED -- Promyshlennost' Stroitel'nykh Materialov, 25 Aug 50

Plans for development of the local construction materials industry in the next few years provide for a considerable increase in the production of silica bricks. This should be achieved both by building new enterprises and by expanding existing ones, as well as by generally improving the utilization of present productive capacities. In this connection one should point out a number of serious organizational defects which hinder the utilization of reserves.

In most of the silica-brick plants, equipment is still allowed to be idle during long periods. In the "Rossilikatkirpich" Trust, idle time amounts to 15 percent of the working period, and in individual enterprises it is even more. One of the main reasons for this is the unsystematic method of producing spare parts, and, consequently, poor organization of repair work. Each plant manufactures a large number of parts for its own needs. Usually they are expensive and do not meet technical requirements. Frequently, more expensive materials are used for the manufacture of parts than would be necessary, only because these materials happen to be on hand. Individual parts are poorly finished, very often without regard to blueprints and without observing the specified tolerance norms. The lack of standard parts makes it impossible for repair workers to assemble complete units in advance; each part has to be adjusted individually. The shortage or complete lack of interchangeable parts has a marked effect on production.

Production of spare parts for mechanized silica-brick plants should be concentrated in one enterprise. At present, orders are placed with several machine-building plants of "Rosmashstroy" Trust. If one of the plants would

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specialize in servicing the needs of the silica industry, it would be easier and less costly to produce standard parts. As a result of nonstandardization of parts, one press may produce bricks of varying dimensions. Financial losses due to reduced quality of bricks amount to about 15 percent in plants of this trust.

The practice of supplying enterprises with various auxiliary materials and spare parts without any norms, and only upon application of the plants, is faulty. The plants usually order excessive supplies "just in case," thereby creating an unnecessary surplus of various materials. In the absence of norms, enterprises tend to waste materials.

At present, silica plants produce only one item of mass production, i.e., common bricks. However, the same raw material -- lime and sand mixtures -- can be used for producing blocks, hollow and face bricks, and various construction parts, such as window sills, beams, and slabs. They are considerably cheaper than cement or reinforced-concrete parts. Waste products of the silica industry can be used for mineral wool and other goods.

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